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ABSTRACT

Suggestions for helping communities achieve the first National Education Goal--by the year 2000, all children will start school ready to learn--are presented in this document. The ways in which readiness is developed and what communities can do to support families are described. Examples are provided of 13 community projects that are preparing children to learn. A list of 26 resource groups and 38 suggested readings are included. (LMI)

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What Other Communities Are Doing....

National Education Goal #1

By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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1. The Importance of Being Ready

The preschool years soared to the top of the education reform agenda during the 1980's, for good reason. Children who arrive for their first day of school ready to learn bring home a positive first impression of formal learning—an impression that can work to their advantage for years to come.

Children who are not prepared for school lag behind, become frustrated, and may later drop out. A good start doesn't guarantee a good finish, but a bad start is tough to overcome.

2. What is Readiness?

We know readiness is important but we might not be sure what it means. When most of us hear the term 'readiness,' we probably begin ticking off our own mental checklists: Is the child immunized? Well-fed? Knows the ABC's? Gets along with others? There are many questions that we would all likely consider when it comes to readiness, but as yet there is no direct way to measure our nation's progress toward the first Goal.

The National Education Goals Panel has been working toward a definition of readiness. Building on the work of many professionals in the fields of education, health, sociology, and others, the Panel's definition identifies five dimensions to assess young children's readiness to learn:

1. **Physical Well-Being and Motor Development.** (healthy, well-fed and well-rested; equally adept at handling a crayon, for example, as climbing a jungle-gym)
2. **Social and Emotional Development.** (secure adult relationships; able to play and work with others)
3. **Language Usage.** (able to express thoughts and feelings; reading skills)
4. **Cognition and General Knowledge.** (knows colors and shapes; familiar with concepts like hot and cold)
5. **Approaches to Learning.** (curiosity, creativity, independence, cooperativeness, and persistence)

These five dimensions may be helpful to communities that are asking, "How will we define 'readiness for school' in *our* community?"

3. How is Readiness Developed?

For most communities, defining readiness leads to thinking about how it is developed.

A key to developing it is what University of Chicago sociologist James Coleman calls "social capital." Social capital exists in the relationship among parents and other adults and children—relationships through which adults' values, experiences, and expectations are shared with children. But Dr. Coleman points out that while traditional forms of capital—money and education—have grown over time, social capital has declined. In other words, today's adults are generally wealthier and better educated, but their children are not reaping the benefits.

Time to Get Ready

While parents' income and education levels play a role in determining their children's readiness for school, the deciding factor seems to be *time commitment*.

This is the conclusion reached in a recent article in *Scientific American* that links the remarkable success of Asian refugee children to "the family's commitment to accomplishment and education." In these modest homes, where very little English is spoken, education dominates household activities. These dedicated parents are overcoming disadvantages by taking to heart their role as primary educators of their children.

Child psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner put it this way: "In order to develop, a child needs the enduring, irrational involvement of one or more adults in care and joint activity with the child." When asked to restate what he meant by "irrational involvement," he said, "Somebody has got to be crazy about that kid!"

And kids agree with the experts: A few years ago, researchers Stinnet and DeFrain asked 1,500 young children the question "What do you think makes a happy family?" The answer most frequently offered was not "money, cars, fine homes, or televisions," but "doing things together."

Yet the amount of total contact parents have with their children has dropped in recent years. In 1965, the average parent had roughly 30 hours of contact with his or her children each week. Twenty years later that number had dropped 40 percent, to just 17 hours.

All time seems to be important for children, not just what author Deborah Fallows calls "all-out, undisturbed, down-on-the-floor-with-the-blocks time." Ordinary time spent with parents and other adults shapes and defines a child's world. Simple daily habits provide a secure and stable environment for children to live in. Up at seven; play after breakfast; lunch at noon; supper at six; then into the bath; teeth brushed; story time; kiss and a hug; and lights out by eight. Familiar, regular routines like these are crucial. And, according to Dr. Coleman, it is through these kinds of everyday experiences that children learn fundamental values, self-discipline, work and play habits, and other personal characteristics—mostly from parents and other important adults in their lives.

Doing Things Together: The Key to Readiness

Time and doing things together is the key, but readiness for school also means spending time together wisely.

When parents in a community think about helping their children arrive at school ready to learn, they may want to know about a report from the University of Illinois indicating that reading aloud to children is the *single most important activity contributing to their eventual success in reading*. And reading, as we all know, is itself the key to almost every other form of learning.

An award-winning article in *Parents' Magazine* points out that we begin *talking* to our babies from the day they are born—why not begin *reading* to them, too? Infants naturally love the rhythm and rhyme of Mother Goose, even if they do not yet grasp the meaning. Regular reading encourages close bonding between parent and child; and children that are read to are far more likely to become readers themselves. With a little effort, regular reading can become a hard habit to break.

Many communities are working to help families develop that habit. The Elgin, Illinois, YWCA helps parents and children in its town learn to read together. With financial assistance from the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, the YWCA hosts preschool and adult literacy classes, followed by sessions where parents read to their children and do crafts and other activities with them.

It may come as no surprise that parents' education level seems to make a difference in whether a child gets read to. A national survey found that about three-quarters of parents read to their children three or more times a week, but

that only about half of parents without high school diplomas do. Too often the reason is that these parents cannot themselves read.

A number of communities are taking steps to help all parents be able to read to their children:

In Salem, Oregon, a community college, a local bank, the health department, the housing authority, the public library, a church, the children's services division, and the local newspaper work together to offer low-income families parenting skills, and basic employment and literacy skills.

In Atlanta, learning is a family affair for 60 parents and their preschool children who are part of a program of the National Center for Family Literacy. Instead of waving goodbye at the bus stop, mothers and fathers come along too, receiving skill training and career counselling while the children spend the day alternating between regular preschool and activities shared with their parents.

Armed with the conviction that one person can make a difference, Abby Cleland, Coordinator of the Abbeville-Greenwood, South Carolina, Library Project conducts literacy classes for individual in the local Women, Infants and Children program. She reads books to children on neighborhood playgrounds, and helps imprisoned mothers read books for their children into a tape recorder. Says Cleland, "It's a community working together and that's very important if we're going to solve any social problem."

The Teachable Moment

A number of communities are thinking about how to encourage family outings and excursions as part of their community-wide strategy. Taking the nation as a whole, there is lots of room for improvement. National data show that only about a third of young children see the inside of a library every month. About a fifth visit a museum, art gallery, or historical site.

So much of the time that families could spend doing things together is eaten up in front of the "tube." The average two to five-year-old watches nearly 28 hours of television a week—that's four hours a day! There are some very worthwhile television programs for young children, but none can replace the attention of a parent or caring adult.

Each day with children abounds with "teachable moments." Sorting the socks can be a counting and color lesson. Making a grocery list is a chance for thinking up and writing down common nouns—and shopping a chance to name things. With a little imagination, learning can complement almost every activity.

Networking

Parents in some communities are building networks. Mothers in Vienna, Virginia, publish *Welcome Home*, a national newsletter written entirely by mothers for mothers. Each issue is filled with useful information, helpful tips, and other "mothering strategies." An easier way to potty train. A better way to teach numbers. The best TV programs—and the worst. It's a nationwide public forum enabling mothers to share wisdom with one another.

In West Boulder, Colorado, 50 to 70 mothers and their children gather twice a month at a Mothers of PreSchoolers (MOPS) program—one of hundreds nationwide. While the children are kept busy in various supervised activities, the mothers spend the morning trading parenting tips and learning techniques, talking things over in small groups, and above all, getting strength and comfort from other mothers in similar circumstances.

Balancing wage work and home work

A 1990 survey by *USA Today* found that 73 percent of all two-parent families would have one parent stay home with children "if money were not an issue." And a 1989 poll in *Public Opinion* found that 84 percent of all employed mothers agree with the statement, "If I could afford it, I would rather be at home with my children."

But more and more families are finding it necessary for both parents to work just to make ends meet. And many single mothers make heroic efforts to make ends meet while still fulfilling the responsibilities of motherhood.

So as part of their readiness strategy, many communities are considering ways to help working parents spend more time with their children. Businesses can play a vital role in helping families perform the "balancing act" of work and home.

Some companies are developing imaginative ways to help employees spend more time with their children. The Rolscreen Company of Pella, Iowa, has had

a job sharing program since 1975, which enables two employees to split a position, each working part-time. This arrangement allows for flexible schedules, and job partners can fill in for each other during vacations or when emergencies come up at home.

In the San Francisco Bay area, modern technology allows some 80 Pacific Bell managers to work at home, linked to office by computer modem and fax.

In Chicago, the Creative Work Alternatives Database helps to place working mothers who want more time at home with their children with employers who offer flexible hours, job sharing, and other alternative work arrangements.

4. What Can Communities Do to Support Their Families?

Families and experts agree: spending time with children and doing things together are the twin pillars of school readiness. Communities that are thinking about how to ensure that *all* children enter school ready to learn recognize that many young children live in homes that are fragmented or broken; homes where poverty, illiteracy, and other social ills take their toll. In such circumstances, parents may need help in caring for their children.

There are at least three areas in which communities can act in order to help: 1) prenatal and health care, 2) parenting skills, and 3) childcare and preschool.

Prenatal and Health Care

A 1989 White House Task Force on Infant Mortality found that 400,000 children are born with disabilities every year. More than one quarter of these impairments (which include vision, learning, and hearing disabilities, mental retardation, autism, and cerebral palsy) are the result of *preventable* problems such as mothers use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco during pregnancy, inadequate prenatal care, or low birthweight.

A program in Atlanta, Georgia, is getting the word out on the streets about the harmful effects of drugs on the mental functions of mothers and the developing child in the womb. The program recruits inner city mothers and teaches them how to train other mothers in their neighborhood.

Some communities have added legal sanctions to their education efforts. The Muskegon County, Michigan, district attorney has prosecuted mothers who took

drugs while pregnant. And at least eight states now include drug exposure *in utero* in their definition of child abuse.

One way a community can help its children get proper prenatal and health care is to make sure that families receive information about existing programs. In 1989, the President signed new laws entitling virtually *all* poor pregnant women and young children to Medicaid payment for comprehensive care. Now, just getting the word out can make a difference.

Many communities find that the maternity ward is an ideal way to reach parents with young children. New parents are typically an eager and receptive audience, and working in hospitals is usually the only way to reach the whole population of young children before they are registered—five years later—for kindergarten.

As we all know, babies arrive without instruction manuals. The Decatur, Illinois Baby Talk program does the next best thing; its volunteers place parenting guides in the hands of new mothers and fathers while they're still at the hospital. And they seize the moment to sign them up to receive a unique and fun-to-read newsletter that follows the growth of their baby.

Another way is to make existing services more effective for families, by improving coordination among nutritionists, health clinics, and government and private service providers.

In order to meet the needs of a large migrant population with a high birth rate and a high infant mortality rate, the South Plains Health Provider Organization in West Texas stresses outreach and offers enhanced prenatal and postpartum services, well-baby care, and enrollment in the Department of Agriculture's Women, Infants, and Children program. The Amarillo clinic also offers dental care, mental health care, and social and educational programs.

Using funds from Head Start, Jersey City, New Jersey, provides preschool children with hot meals, medical screening, and immunizations.

Parenting Skills

Given the large number of teenage mothers, single parents, and young families living apart from an older generation that might have transmitted childrearing wisdom and assisted with childcare, a significant knowledge gap exists among

young parents. Communities around the country are moving to fill this gap and help parents do their job a little better.

Targeting low-income families with young children in Dade County, Florida, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) employs community members as "Parent Partners," conducts home visits, and holds group meetings designed to help parents be their children's first teachers.

Fifty parents and teachers have trained over 1,000 parents in Riverside, California, to teach their children Dorothy Rich's ten 'Megaskills'—which include confidence, responsibility and motivation.

The Poudre County, Colorado, Even Start program has brought hope to drug-infested trailer parks by instituting a comprehensive approach to the residents' problems: teaching parents to be teachers, arming parents with literacy skills, and getting children ready to learn. Mentors visit families at home, giving the kids individualized lessons to aid their development, and offer literacy training to needy parents plus information on food and shelter. Parents attend G.E.D. and English classes nearby.

Missouri school districts offer free parent education programs. Using the Parents as Teachers program, the Ferguson-Florissant district provides families that choose to participate with individualized home visits, group meetings, developmental screening for children, and referrals to other agencies.

Childcare and Preschool

It's no secret that more American children live in homes with a single parent or two working parents. In only 20 years, we have witnessed a doubling in the percentage of working mothers with children under 6 years-old—from three in every ten in 1970 to six in ten by 1990.

The number of children born to single parents has soared by 292 percent—from 5 percent of all births in 1960 to close to *a quarter of all births* in 1986. And over one million children see their parents divorced every year.

(Meanwhile, our two biggest competitors, Japan and Germany, saw *their* percentage of illegitimate births *fall* during that same time period—by 2% and 25%, respectively; and the Japanese and German divorce rates although increasing, remain a small fraction of our own.)

One result is a greater demand for childcare. Businesses can play a vital role in helping working parents balance their wage-earning job with their childrearing job.

Realizing that separating employees from their children during the work day leads to absenteeism and stress, some employers have brought the children to the workplace. Ben and Jerry's, the Vermont ice cream maker, runs a child care center in a renovated farmhouse a stone's throw away from the production facility. Parents can eat lunch with the children and can see them playing in the yard during the day.

The 1990 Federal Child Care and Development Block Grants provide vouchers to low-income parents to buy childcare at the location of their choice—public, private, or religious. As well as ensuring care for millions of low-income children, these grants may promote the opening of many smaller, neighborhood and church-based facilities permitting a greater measure of familiarity, convenience, and parental involvement.

The Coalition for the Restoration of the Black Family serves 200 churches in the Los Angeles area, keeping them informed about education, economic, and social issues that concern the black community. As a result of the Coalition's efforts, churches in the area have begun offering child care services and other outreach programs for inner-city families.

The quality of childcare and preschool has generally improved in recent years. More are including elements of parental involvement as well as offering a richer curriculum. In a Syracuse, New York, pre-kindergarten program, parents not only are teachers to their own children, but often become trained classroom aides in the program as well.

At Blessed Sacrament Child Development Center in San Antonio, Texas, children from two to five-years-old, learn while they play. The year-round, 12-hour a day facility offers a curriculum designed to spark children's imaginations and desire to learn.

To ensure that all children have access to appropriate child care and preschool experiences, communities will probably want to take advantage of existing programs and funds. Communities may also want to provide parents and others

with information on what constitutes high quality day care and preschool—things to look for, questions to ask.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children ranks the following questions among the most important when looking at a childcare site:

Program

- ☐ Are children helped to increase their language skills and knowledge of the world?
- ☐ Is there adequate and appropriate equipment that fosters physical development and imaginative play?

Staff

- ☐ Does the staff observe and record each child's development?
- ☐ Is staffing sufficient for the number of children attending?
- ☐ Does the staff encourage parents to be involved, and provide them with information about community services and activities?
- ☐ Are the parents allowed to drop by at any time?

Health

- ☐ If meals are provided, are they nutritious?
- ☐ Are the facilities cleaned frequently?
- ☐ Does at least one staff member know first aid and the medical needs of each child?
- ☐ Are emergency numbers posted?

Facility

- ☐ Is the building comfortably heated and cooled, well-lit and free of hazards?
- ☐ Are there smoke detectors?
- ☐ Is there adequate space for the number of children—both indoors and out?

Conclusion

Although communities face similar challenges, no two approaches to school readiness will be the same. The idea is for communities to envision what all children in *their* community need in order to flourish in school, then build a plan to make it happen.

Kids who *do* flourish throughout their school years not only arrive ready for their first day of kindergarten, but every day thereafter. Readiness is a prerequisite for success at all levels of school and work.

Child psychologist Harold Stevenson points out that although many families provide stimulating environments for their preschoolers, "once American children start first grade, American mothers tend to believe that it's now *the school's job* to educate their children. They don't follow through." "Asian mothers," on the other hand, "pay more attention to their children's *physical* well-being," and only "start taking their children's academic lives seriously at grade one."

The lesson might be that education should start at the beginning and keep right on going, to a lifetime of learning. America will reach the first National Education Goal—and all the others—if we start early and never stop!

The following pages describe a variety of ways that communities are working to get all their children to school ready to learn, provide some sources for help and further information, and suggest additional readings on school readiness.

What Other Communities are Doing

Abbeville-Greenwood Library Project
Greenwood, South Carolina

Armed with a grant from the Library Service Construction Act and matching community funds, Children's Service Coordinator Abby Cleland has waged war on illiteracy in her South Carolina community. Her programs promote early learning for children and adult literacy.

"Because parents are so important to a child's development, I'm trying to reach out and help them understand their role," Cleland said. "It's a community working together and that's very important if we're going to solve any social problem."

The Mother Read program is one of Cleland's most successful. Once a month, she goes to the state women's penitentiary and provides children's books to mothers enrolled in the literacy class. The mothers read stories into a tape recorder and Cleland sends the tapes to the children so that they can hear their mothers reading them a book.

Cleland also works with Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), a U.S. Department of Agriculture program that gives vouchers for baby formula to women with infants. She has added a new twist to the program by requiring mothers to attend four nutrition classes during the year.

"I combined forces with the nutritionist who puts on the classes and I take along different kinds of books to talk to the class about," Cleland said. "What we want them to do is just start up a conversation with their children. Some of these parents are illiterate and are very intimidated by having to read to their children."

To help ensure that all children have an opportunity to listen to a story, Cleland provides Story Hours at the local libraries. "By exposing children to listening, they'll tend to be tuned in more," she said. "We're trying to get them ready to learn."

Last summer, she joined forces with a playground program run by a local minister. She went to the playground once a week and read to the children

while informing them about various activities and programs available at the library.

"Getting kids into the library who had never been here before, and maybe never even had a book in their hands before is what the program's all about," said Bruce Heimburger, Library Director.

All people with whom Cleland comes in contact are placed on the mailing list for her monthly newsletter. The letter goes out to approximately 450 people and suggests tips on child/parent interaction and announces upcoming library activities.

"I can see that it is really making a difference," Cleland said. "It gives the kids hope and it gives hope for the entire community."

Contact:
Abby Cleland
Greenwood Library
106 N. Main Street
Greenwood, South Carolina 29646
(803) 223-4515

Baby Talk, Decatur, Illinois

The Baby Talk program sends trained counselors to hospitals to greet new parents with a baby book to read to the newborn and a few minutes of suggestions regarding child development and the importance of reading and talking to the newborn infant.

The first Baby Talk program started in 1986 in Decatur, Illinois, under the direction of Claudia Quigg. The group sends staff to the local hospitals every other day to reach out to parents and encourage them to take an active role in their child's development and education.

"If we just had programming and invited parents to come, then the only parents we would get are the ones already motivated, and they are not the ones most in need," Quigg said.

By taking the program to the parents at the hospital, Baby Talk is able to bridge socio-economic gaps. Quigg points out in a single day she may speak with a mother who has a Ph.D., a very involved father, and a 13-year-old new mother.

"When you're a parent, whether you're making $10,000 or $100,000, you experience the same problems," Quigg said.

Quigg has found that Baby Talk representatives are generally welcome in the hospital room of the new mother. "This is the best time to meet the parents because every parent is highly motivated and eager to get their hands on any information to help that baby."

"When you deliver a baby, it's such an exhilarating experience that you welcome anyone who is going to give you information about this little creature you just brought into the world," agreed Deb Wiedenhoffer, a former recipient of Baby Talk services and current Baby Talk staffer.

Wiedenhoffer has become part of a new Baby Talk contingent that reaches out to mothers at prenatal clinics so that a relationship may be established before the staffer enters the hospital room.

The program was initiated by the local school system, and has recently received support from libraries, hospitals, and businesses.

"Giving parents an understanding of child development gives them a tool for teaching success," Quigg said. "When kids are raised in a home where someone believes they will succeed, achievement happens naturally."

Contact:
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Baby Talk Director
Rolling Prairie Library
345 W. Eldorado
Decatur, Illinois 62522
(217) 429-2586

Blessed Sacrament Child Development Center, San Antonio, Texas

The Blessed Sacrament Child Development Center teaches two to five-year-olds using broad themes, such as the words "America" or "spring." Each theme dominates the classroom for 1 to 2 weeks, during which teachers set up decorated booths that offer the children the chance to participate in hands-on activities that convey certain academic skills such as pre-writing or monetary values. During much of the day, children choose the booths where they want to participate. Each child must, however, participate at the pre-writing, math, and computer centers.

"Our goal is to have these children prepared for success," said Katherine Lozano, Director of the Center. "I want the kids to be a success in reading, writing, and creative thinking."

The Child Development Center teaches about different cultures through drama and creative dances. "They open up the kids' minds to so many new experiences," said Carmelita Galindo, whose four-year-old daughter Amanda has danced around the house in flowing gowns since a group of Flamenco dancers performed at the school.

"This school makes kids aware of how they shape the world," Lozano said. "Children must take some ownership in the world. We want them to look at themselves and at their world and know that they have choices available."

Lozano also emphasizes communication. "I don't ever want a child growing up being afraid to speak out. We get children to talk to the teachers when there's something they don't like. They have a voice; we teach them to use it."

"I challenge children's minds to grow in a way that I don't think they always get at home," Lozano said. "Here, they're getting more than plain daycare."

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Early Childhood Family Education, Moorhead, Minnesota

A major goal of the Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program in Moorhead, Minnesota is to help parents understand child development from the child's point of view.

"The idea is to put adults in an early childhood environment," said Lauri Winterfeldt-Shanks ECFE Coordinator for the Moorhead School District. "It's just a ball to lose your adult inhibitions for 45 minutes!"

Parents register for three or eight week sessions, attending class with their children ages birth to kindergarten, for four hours a week. The first 45 minutes of each class are spent doing interactive activities.

Parents learn about home safety by crawling along the floor with their children, taking note of dangerous objects within their children's reach. Parents may fingerpaint with their children or trace their faces on a mirror using shaving cream.

"The program is totally non-targeted," Winterfeldt-Shanks said. "Any parents can sign up and it's not uncommon to have lawyers and doctors sitting next to unemployed adults comparing their Lego™ trucks."

During the second half of each class, the children stay with early childhood teachers in preschool programming, while the parents participate in adult education classes or prepare for their G.E.D.

The registration fee equals about $1.50 per hour of instruction; however if a family says it can't afford the fee, then the fee is waived and paid by the state.

The program also features home visits; four parent educators help parents with literacy skills and give advice on parenting strategies.

"One mother couldn't read the signs in the grocery store and couldn't take advantage of sales of coupons," Winterfeldt-Shanks said. After parent educators taught the mother how to read coupons, she saved six dollars on her first shopping trip. "On a severely limited income, those small savings mean a lot," said Winterfeldt-Shanks.

Local health department officials also refer cases to the ECFE. "There may be extreme stress in a household or the health inspector may just find that the parents are isolated," Winterfeldt-Shanks said. "Parents need some sort of extended social network to be successful."

The program has also reached out to service clubs within the community. Winterfeldt-Shanks makes presentations to the groups, asking them to fill a specific need such as providing certain equipment for a particular preschool.

"In general, our whole program is focused on helping parents learn effective ways to interact with their children," Winterfeldt-Shanks said.

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Family Connection Project, Decatur, Georgia

The Family Connection Project at Fifth Avenue Elementary School will bring together programs from a variety of social service organizations in an effort to provide for the needs of children from birth to age 5 beginning in the fall of 1992.

"Our aim is a seamless garment of preschool experiences for children," says Don Griffith, superintendent of the City Schools of Decatur. "Many receive this in their homes, but more and more are not getting what they need in their early years."

Griffith's network of programs covers children three and under with the Child Development Center at the local high school, or the Parents As Teachers program based at Fifth Avenue Elementary. At age three, children may register for the local Head Start Program, and at age four, a state-run program funded by Georgia's Project Rebound takes over.

"Children who experience the entire sequence over a five year period of time will be ready for what school has to offer them," Griffith says.

Although there is a great need for childcare in the Decatur area, 85 percent of the families have an income under $16,000 and can't afford it. To combat this problem, The Family Connection Advisory Board has secured $50,000 that will be used to fund 3 to 5 home care centers.

A Networking Committee composed of over 30 businesses, churches, community centers, private individuals, the United Way, and others meets quarterly to discuss progress, provide input to related activities, and share programs.

"It is virtually impossible for children to progress through the traditional grade structure of an educational system without prerequisite skills," Griffith says, "our community mobilizing itself to make sure our kids get them."

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Family First, Lucas County, Ohio

The Family First program provides volunteer "mentors" for parents of children with special needs. The mentors are themselves parents of disabled children. The program, which also serves 11 counties throughout Ohio, will have 11 mentors counselling 100 families by the end of this year.

The program aims to catch problems early. "A lot of our early intervention therapies prevent physical deformities from occurring later," said Linda Hasecke, regional coordinator for Family First.

For example, a mentor noticed that a child's head was tilting slightly. The mentor taught the family therapies that correct the condition. As a result, that child was able to avoid corrective surgery later on.

The Family First program also helps teach parents how to develop their children's motor skills. "I'm a teacher, but I had no idea about all the little steps leading up to walking," Hasecke said.

Parents reach Family First via a number of avenues. Some referrals come from a collaboration of 66 social service agencies in the county.

Other families receive support by calling the Family First referral phone line, which is operated by six volunteer parents five days a week.

The organization attempts to match the family with a mentor from a similar background. "We've made sure that the mentors aren't all middle-class, white mothers," Hasecke said. "We try hard to provide mentors from a variety of backgrounds so that we can find the person best suited to help the particular family."

When a mentor is paired with a family, he or she begins a series of home visits. "The first visit is usually just sitting and listening and holding hands," Hasecke said. "That's something many of these parents haven't had."

Mentors are trained during a three-day seminar and they are then called back to training seminars every three weeks.

"We basically provide emotional support and information to parents," Hasecke said. "We provide somebody to say, 'Yes, I've been there, I understand how frustrating this is, and I can help.'"

Contact:
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(419) 242-9587

Family Learning Program, Atlanta, Georgia

The National Center for Family Literacy has used the Kenan model to set up programs in over 200 sites in 42 states. Under the model, parents attend school with their children each day. The Atlanta site, called the Family Learning Program, began operating last summer with a grant from Toyota Families for Learning.

A publication of the National Center for Family Literacy explains that:

> "Our current strategy—bringing poor children into our institutions at even younger ages—reflects a serious flaw in our thinking. This approach sends the wrong message to parents about their ability and responsibility to assist with their children's learning. Implying that only teachers should teach not only perpetuates the low self-esteem of parents, but sets up an impossible task for our schools. Parents need to be encouraged to help their children learn. They need to develop the awareness and skills which make that support possible."

The Family Learning Program addresses these concerns by catering to three and four-year-old children whose parents choose to sharpen their educational skills. In many cases that means learning to read. In the last year, the program has served 60 families for free in the heart of Atlanta.

The program follows a consistent schedule:

7:30 AM
Parents and children travel together to school by walking, public transportation or the school bus.

8:00-10:45 AM
Parents participate in adult education classes that emphasize practical applications. To learn decimals, the teachers walk the parents through a mock shopping trip during which the parents add up the prices of the items.

During this time, the children are in a preschool program which allows each child to plan an activity to do during the two hours. "Teachers act as

facilitators to assure that no matter what the child chooses to do, the child is learning developmental skills," Moore said. If the child chooses to play in the kitchen, the teacher may help the child slice pizza while teaching fractions. There are two teachers in the classroom of about 20 students.

10:45-11:30 AM
The children eat lunch in the cafeteria with their parents.

11:30-12:00 PM
Parent And Child Time (PACT). The children choose an activity to do with their parents. "We try to do activities that they can carry back into the home," Moore said.

12:00-12:45 PM
Children rest or play while parents listen to guest speakers or discuss topics such as child immunizations. According to parent Sharon Buyers, this was her favorite part of the day. "We talked about news in Atlanta and about things going on in the community," Buyers said. "It gave me an opportunity to make new friends."

1:00-2:15 PM
The children continue to rest or play while the parents enter Vocation Time. A mother who was interested in catering worked in the school cafeteria while an aspiring nurse worked in the medical office. The program also brings in speakers to teach job interviewing skills. "It gives a lot of us an opportunity that we probably wouldn't have had," Buyers said.

The Atlanta program also strives to maintain healthy community relations. Moore explained, "Most of our families come from the housing projects. All housing projects have resident presidents who have usually been there for many years and the people have tremendous respect for them. A resident president can make or break this program, so we need their support."

Moore says her program has been fortunate to have good relations with the resident presidents and to ensure continued good relations, she is forming an

advisory board comprised of the Resident Presidents. She also attends all tenant meetings in the projects and sets up information booths at all community events.

Contacts:

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Atlanta, Georgia 30308
(404) 873-3979

HIPPY/Miami, Dade County, Florida

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based program that helps economically and socially disadvantaged parents understand how to prepare their four and five-year-old children to attend school.

HIPPY employs local community members (some of whom are former parent participants) as paraprofessionals to recruit families, conduct home visits, and lead group meetings, all designed to give parents the skills and confidence to be their children's first teachers.

The activities include visits in participants' homes, as well as parent group meetings held at neighborhood schools. At school meetings, the paraprofessionals, called "Parent Partners," show parents activities that they can work on at home with their children for a minimum of fifteen minutes each day.

HIPPY/Miami operates in low-income areas of that city and is run by the Dade County Public Schools. Seventy percent of participants are black, 20 percent Hispanic, and 10 percent Haitian.

Staff also make social services and health care referrals as needed. Individual counseling is available on an informal basis by the professional staff in the program and on a more formal basis by referral to local community agencies.

The program, first developed in Israel in 1969, now operates in 58 sites, in 17 states. About half of the programs are run by schools, the rest by various community agencies and social services. Since the program began in Dade County in 1985, HIPPY/Miami has served approximately 275 families.

Not accidentally, HIPPY/Miami also strengthens family and community bonds as it gives parents the skills to be their children's first teachers.

Contacts:

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New York, New York 10010
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Dade County Public Schools
1450 N.E. 2nd Ave.
Miami, Florida 33132
(305) 995-171

Parents as Teachers
Ferguson-Florissant School District, Missouri

Missouri is the only state with a statutory mandate to offer free parent education and family support services in *every* school district. The Ferguson-Florissant district was one of four that piloted the Parents As Teachers (PAT) program in 1981.

The philosophy underlying PAT is that parents are a child's first and most influential teachers, and the role of the state is to help families give children a strong educational foundation. The PAT program builds this foundation for children from birth to age three by using a four-pronged approach:

1) **Personalized home visits** by certified parent educators.
2) **Group meetings** create a sense of community as parents listen to speakers and share experiences and concerns. Topics might include such things as toilet training, sibling rivalries and camping with children.
3) **Screening** for developmental advances or delays in the children help parents understand what they can do to address their child's needs.
4) **Referral services** allow parents to take their concerns to specific agencies equipped to address specific problems.

"Our main goal is to build and support interaction between the child and the parent," said Marion Wilson, director of the Ferguson-Florissant PAT program. "We're teaching parents to become better observers."

That's exactly what the home visits did for the Rhuman family. "The parent educators answered every developmental question you could ever think of, and they taught us what to look for," Sandy Rhuman said. "It made me and my husband become more a part of our children's development rather than just sitting back and watching it happen."

The parent educators work closely with the families and are an integral component of PAT programs. In the Ferguson-Florissant district, there are 18 parent educators, each of whom holds a four year college degree and has undergone a one week training seminar organized by the state.

A 1991 survey showed that at age 3, children in PAT scored significantly above national norms on measures of school related achievement. The survey also showed that more than half of the PAT children observed to have delays in development overcame these delays by age 3.

However, critics of PAT complain that the programs may undermine parental confidence in raising children and facilitate government intrusion into family life.

Peggy Noonan, a parent, disagrees. "If it wasn't for PAT, I would have never known what to look for in my children's development," she said. "The program really builds parental self-esteem."

"I didn't want to stick my kids in any type of daycare program," Rhuman said. "I wanted to do things with my kids myself and that's what the PAT program has allowed me to do."

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Florissant, Missouri 63033
(314) 831-8798

Poudre County Even Start, Fort Collins, Colorado

The Poudre County Even Start program services two trailer parks that are home to the district's largest concentration of dropouts as well as rising levels of drug abuse and delinquency. In addition to making frequent home visits, Even Start volunteer storytellers read to children once a week inside the "learning center" trailer that Even Start rents.

A group of seven mentors is trained to make weekly visits to the homes of over 45 families in two trailer parks. In any Even Start program, there are three simple goals: 1) to get the children ready to learn, 2) to teach parents to be teachers, and 3) to promote adult literacy.

According to program director, Carol Salas-Miller, "the mentors try to get the kids to learn to be quiet during storytime and sit in place so that when they get to school, they'll have certain skills that the school would expect."

When a mentor enters the individual trailers, the first problems tackled are any immediate needs such as food, clothing, or threats of eviction. In these matters, mentors are trained to point parents to the appropriate agencies. Simply reading through the agencies' informational pamphlets together provides an opportunity to incorporate a literacy lesson for parents.

The mentors also read stories to the children in their homes. The stories, and all in-home activities, are geared to the developmental level of the family. For families with children that cover a wide age range, a high school student from a work study program may accompany the mentor allowing more than one activity to run simultaneously during the home visit.

The adult education classes held in the "learning center" include General Educational Development classes and English as a Second Language classes. To allow parents to attend these classes and leave their children at home, the program has instituted a babysitting component. Teens can babysit for Even Start families and earn Even Start vouchers that they can trade for donated assets including money, gift certificates, and sporting goods.

The Poudre County Even Start program differs from other Even Start programs mainly because of the training the mentors receive, according to Salas-Miller.

"We provide ongoing training," she said. "The mentors go on monthly retreats and we have two-hour staff meetings each week to write the curriculum."

The program gets 65 percent of its funding from Federal sources and 35 percent from private sources.

"The real goal," Salas-Miller said, "Is to empower the community so that it can run programs like this by itself."

Contact:
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Director, Poudre District Even Start
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Ft. Collins, Colorado 80521
(303) 490-3653

Sesame Street PEP Initiative, Dallas, Texas

The Sesame Street PEP (Preschool Educational Program) Initiative uses just the right mix of television and preschool to get children ages two to five ready to learn.

The objective of the program is to make preschool children eager to learn. The program hope to accomplish this with three simple activities:

Active viewing takes place as childcare providers and preschool children watch portions of recorded episodes of "Sesame Street" and apply interactive techniques suggested in a detailed training manual.

Activities take place after each viewing period. The activities are suggested by the Sesame Street activity guide. Each childcare provider participating in the PEP Initiative receives a monthly guide to the upcoming shows complete with suggested activities. The activities help to teach the children about human diversity, organizational patterns, and other developmental areas.

Active Storybook Reading. The childcare providers receive training in active reading and they are also equipped with a list of books to read to various age groups.

"The program is offered to communities through their local television stations which must sign an agreement with the national sponsor, Children's Television Network (CTN)," said Becky Sykes, coordinator of the Dallas PEP Initiative.

When a local station undertakes the PEP Initiative, the station receives a $10,000 grant from CTN, but the community must also raise a considerable amount of money on its own, according to Sykes.

"Studies show that children who watch Sesame Street receive great educational benefits from the show," Sykes said. "However, the benefits are even greater when children and adults watch the show together and interact."

Contact:
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KERA Channel 13
3000 Harry Hines Blvd.
Dallas, Texas 75201
(214) 740-9351

Success By Six, Charlotte, North Carolina

Success By Six is an initiative that brings together different members of a community to help prepare children for learning. The first program started in Minneapolis in 1988. Since then, the United Way has helped start seven other programs across the country, and there are currently over 50 cities considering adopting the initiative.

"What we're doing is pulling together pieces of the community to make changes in a broad fashion," said Lauri Ryan who helps coordinate implementation efforts for the United Way of America.

The program revolves around three goals:

1) Building Community Awareness and Understanding.
2) Improving Service Access for All.
3) Expanding public-private collaborative actions to develop an integrated system of services.

In Charlotte, four trained community development workers have set up offices in each of the city's eight neighborhoods. "They literally knock on every door and meet every family," said program coordinator Lynn Otzman. "We want to establish relationships and identify which families have children under six years old. Our first task is then to build trust."

The community development workers each have a group of families they work with to provide whatever services are needed and to bring new programs to the city. Because of the requests of local families, the workers have started a G.E.D. program in the city.

Under the sponsorship of Success By Six, families with like interests meet weekly to discuss common issues. The large Cambodian population meets to discuss gardening and cooking. "These home teams are one way we try to build a feeling of community and strengthen the neighborhood," Otzman said.

The Charlotte program has also recently entered into a partnership with the local Junior League to create crisis nurseries. To accommodate 30 children whose behavior has not been appropriate for other daycare centers, the Junior League

has provided $300,000 to the project which will create nurseries. For example, a two-year-old who has been hitting other children may be directed to the crisis nursery with its small staff/student ratio and well-trained and well-paid teachers.

A community policing program is also underway in Charlotte, and the Carolina Medical Center supply neighborhoods with four nurses who will work with the community workers to educate mothers about prenatal care.

"Success By Six is the spearhead of an entire community movement," Otzman said. "If you don't improve the family and the neighborhood, then you can't get results in the long run."

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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440
(612) 870-6845

Syracuse Prekindergarten Program, Syracuse, New York

The Syracuse Prekindergarten Program targets three and four-year-olds who are eligible based on their number of siblings, the age of their mother, the family income and other factors.

"Our goal is to help each child develop to the maximum of his potential at that particular time in his life," said program director Rhoda Freedman. "Our goal is not to make a child able to do what some professor says he should be able to do at age five."

The program is offered four half-days per week; on the fifth day, parents participate in groups led by a social worker on topics of interest to parents or in parent-child activities led by an early childhood teacher. Parents are also able to participate in a training program for classroom aides that requires working in the preschool classroom and attending a series of two-hour workshops.

"Many parents don't see themselves as the teachers of their children," Freedman said. "We want to help parents to understand how to get their kids ready to be learners. Parents have to indicate to children at the very least that school is an important place."

Key factors in the success of the program include employing staff who are highly qualified and committed to the project. The program also encourages teachers to be flexible and responsive to children's needs.

Program evaluations indicated significant differences between children in the program and comparison children in achievement, attendance, and need for special education through seventh grade. Children of parents who were more actively involved scored better on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary test, the Walker Readiness Test, and the Cooperative Preschool Inventory.

Contact:
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Syracuse Prekindergarten Program
312 Oswego Street
Syracuse, New York 13204
(315) 435-4276

Resource Groups

Health

Childbirth Education Foundation
P.O. Box 5
Richboro, Pennsylvania 18954
(215) 357-2792

Through distribution of its many publications, the Foundation encourages natural childbirth and birthing at home. The foundation also offers referrals to parental education programs and maternal care programs.

National Center for Clinical Infant Programs
733 15th Street NW
Suite 912
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 347-0308

Promotes measures to improve the physical and mental development of children from birth to age three through information exchange, research, training, and public policy development. Among its activities are a graduate fellowship program, training institutes, technical assistance activities, the bulletin *Zero to Three*, task forces to facilitate infancy research, reports on research and public policy issues, and a national clearinghouse.

La Leche League International
9616 Minneapolis Avenue
P.O. Box 1209
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131
1-800-525-3243 (hotline)

This international organization works to promote breastfeeding worldwide through mother support groups and health professionals.

Family Support

Focus on the Family
420 North Cascade Ave.
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
(719) 531-3400
1-800-A-FAMILY (hotline)

A non-profit communications and resource organization, specializing in providing help and information to families in need. Focus on the Family offers assistance with family financing, discipline, marital relationships, single-parenting issues and divorce, substance abuse, homemaking skills, family time management, and more. Their radio broadcasts are heard daily on 1,800 stations, with a daily audience of over one million people. Their publications include *Focus on the Family*, a magazine on family issues, and *Clubhouse Junior*, a magazine for preschoolers. Focus on the Family also publishes books and produces videos.

Coalition for the Restoration of the Black Family
2930 West Imperial Highway
Suite 515
Inglewood, California 90303
(213) 777-4799

A network of concerned citizens working together to address education, economic and social issues and other concerns of the black community. Provides information, referrals, and advice on issues critical to the black family. Encourages churches to take advantage of Federal Child Care and Development Block Grants by starting and publicizing preschool and childcare programs. Conducts seminars on the importance of the role of the father. Assists with development of pro-family legislation.

Home By Choice Group
P.O. Box 103
Vienna, Virginia 22183
(703) 281-6334

The Home By Choice Group is a national organization for mothers who choose to stay home to care for their families. The group provides mothers with a voice on family issues, resource materials to help them educate and care for their children, and encouragement for making the difficult decision to stay home. It also publishes a bimonthly newsletter and sponsors mothers' support groups all over the country.

Home Hold
P.O. Box 422
Winchester, Massachusetts 01890
(617) 729-8426

Home Hold is dedicated to finding creative solutions to the problems faced by single mothers in raising their children. Solutions included such things as cooperative living arrangements and property ownership, job sharing, working at home, and alternative childcare arrangements. Home Hold acts as a network and referral service to bring people in like situations together and also conducts discussion groups on issues facing single parents.

Mothers at Home
8310-A Old Courthouse Road
Vienna, Virginia 22182
(703) 827-5903
1-800-783-4-MOM (hotline)

A non-profit organization devoted to the support of mothers who choose (or would like to choose) a home-centered life in order to nurture their families. The organization has three primary goals: 1) To help mothers at home realize they have made a great choice, 2) to help mothers excel at a job for which no one feels fully prepared, and 3) to correct society's many misconceptions about mothering today. Mothers at Home publishes a 32-page monthly journal, *Welcome Home*.

FEMALE (Formerly Employed Mothers At the Leading Edge)
P.O. Box 31
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126
(708) 941-3553

FEMALE is a resource and advocacy group for mothers who leave the workforce to care for their children at home. The organization's 50 local chapters hold twice-monthly meetings to help these mothers adjust emotionally and financially to their new lifestyles, and also assists them to reenter the job market when they are ready to do so. FEMALE advocates flexible hours, job sharing, and other alternative work arrangements for mothers who choose to work.

MOPS (Mothers Of PreSchoolers)
4175 Harlan Street
Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033
(303) 420-6100

The roughly 600 local MOPS programs worldwide give mothers support and advice on raising their children. MOPS is non-denominational, but individual programs are typically run by churches. While their children are kept busy in supervised activities and games, mothers gather in small groups to share experiences and to receive parenting information and advice. They are also helped with other problems that affect their ability to be good parents, such as marital difficulties or medical needs.

Information and Research

Family Research Council
700 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 393-2100

A social policy research, lobbying, and education organization affiliated with Focus on the Family. Provides information about family life and the importance of parental involvement in children's education and well-being.

Institute for American Values
1841 Broadway, Suite 211
New York, New York 10023
(212) 246-3942

A research group on the role of family in American society. Sponsors conferences on trends in family life, ways to strengthen the institution of the family and other related issues.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Secondary Education
University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 333-1386

The ERIC (Education Research Information Center) Clearinghouse attempts to collect and disseminate all existing information on the development of children from birth through early adolescence, with emphasis on education theory, research, and practice. The clearinghouse provides reference and referral services, on-line searches, and tips on research strategy. It conducts training seminars and workshops for elementary and early childhood groups and researchers, and disseminates complimentary ERIC products, such as the ERIC Digest, newsletters, and brochures.

National Black Child Development Institute
1463 Rhode Island Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 387-1281

Seeks to improve the quality of life for black children and youth; delivers direct services to children and parents; conducts advocacy campaigns aimed at national and local public policies on health, child welfare, education, and child care; and disseminates information.

The National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia University
154 Haven Avenue
New York, New York 10032
(212) 927-8793

The Center was founded to improve child poverty programs by examining efforts at the state and local level and by disseminating information to researchers, policymakers, and program administrators. It also conducts assessments and provides referrals. The Center works in three areas: early childhood care and education; maternal and child health; and the integration and coordination of services for young children and families.

Child Trends
2100 M Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 223-6288

The mission of Child Trends is to expand the scope, use, and quality of statistical information concerning children. Offers an extensive array of reports, papers, and other publications on child statistics.

Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10001
(212) 465-2044.

The Institute attempts to develop new approaches for balancing the competing demands of family and work. It conducts research, publishes and disseminates a number of publications, and offers planning and consulting services to individual companies and government agencies.

Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning
Boston University
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
(617) 353-3309

The Center aims to produce new and useful knowledge about how families, schools, and communities can foster student motivation, learning, and development, and to strengthen connections between these institutions. Activities include research, newsletters, videotapes, a network of scholars, and co-publication of the journal, *Equity and Choice*. The center works with preschools across the country to increase parental and community involvement.

Professional

National Association for the Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 232-8777

A national association of early childhood professionals. It offers educational services and resources to adults who work with and for children; provides policy-related information and legislative analysis; and administers the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a voluntary national accreditation system for early childhood programs.

American Academy of Pediatrics
141 Northwest Point Blvd.
PO Box 927
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60009
(708) 228-5005

A professional association of pediatricians dedicated to furthering the education of its members, advocating for children's services, and informing the general population. Publishes several journals including *Pediatrics*, *Pediatrics in Review*, and *Healthy Kids Magazine*, for children.

National Institute for Child Health and Human Development
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892
(301)496-5133

Funds biological and developmental studies in relation to child and human development. NICHD is a major research institution that funds studies on the physical and mental development of children. Results of these studies are disseminated to professional and lay audiences.

Program Referral

Home and School Institute
Special Projects Office
1201 16th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 466-3633

Develops programs promoting the educational role of the family and community support for learning. Headed by Dorothy Rich, originator of the concept of "MegaSkills." Conducts "MegaSkills" workshops to help parents teach their children skills they need to succeed in school.

Family Resource Coalition
230 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 1625
Chicago, Illinois 60601
(312) 341-0900

Maintains a database of more than 2,500 community-based family resource programs and practitioners throughout the United States; provides training and technical assistance; and publishes materials on topics related to family support.

Head Start Bureau
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 767-8707

Funds local agencies to provide comprehensive developmental services to preschool children of low-income families. Head Start Programs include education, social services, and health services, and they emphasize parental involvement. The Head Start Bureau also administers technical assistance, training, research and evaluation, as well as other research and development projects.

The Center on Effective Services for Children
Jule M. Sugarman, Chairman
P.O. Box 27412
Washington, D.C. 20038
(202) 785-9524

Chaired by the former Director of the federal Head Start program, the Center on Effective Services for Children is a newly established not-for-profit organization devoted to improving children's services. It concentrates on helping national, state and local leaders reduce administrative barriers and provide more comprehensive and coordinated services. The Center has published a handbook called *Building Early Childhood Systems* that shows how to organize the current patchwork of children's services into a coherent system.

Office of Special Education Programs
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
(202) 205-5507

Administers programs and projects that provide special education and related services to children with disabilities. Assistance is provided primarily through

state education agencies to help states and districts serve these children adequately and effectively. Special Education Programs also funds research, training, and other activities to improve the quality of early intervention, preschool, and special education programs.

National Health/Education Consortium
Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Ave. N.W. Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 822-8405

A joint effort of the Institute for Educational Leadership and the National Commission to Prevent Infant Mortality, the National Health/Education Consortium was established to create ways to improve children's services. The Consortium has three goals: to promote the idea of coordinated health and education programs, to strengthen communication and dissemination of information between services, and to recognize and identify exemplary program models for others to follow. The Consortium involves health professionals, educators, policymakers, and administrators in this process.

Further Reading

What does the research say about early childhood education?

Early Childhood Education, 2nd ed. Barry Persky and Leonard Golubchick. $27.00 from the University Press of America, 1991. Thirty-nine essays on current issues in early childhood education.

The Hurried Child. David Elkind. $10.53 from Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1981. Cautions against rushing children into formal education too early.

Early Schooling: The National Debate. Sharon Kagan and Edward Zigler. $12.00 from the Yale University Press, 1987. Twelve views on how soon young children should begin formal schooling and what they should be learning.

The First Three Years of Life. Burton White. $10.95 from Prentice-Hall Press, 1987. Lays out comprehensive education goals for children in their early years.

School Can Wait. Raymond Moore. Brigham Young University Press, 1979. Moore claims that although early schooling may have some short term positive effects, there is no conclusive evidence that it has any long range benefits.

"Day Care or Parental Care?". Richard Gill. *The Public Interest.* Fall 1991. (Number 104). 13-page critique of recent national reports on child care policy.

Family: The Vital Factor. Moira Eastman. $15.95 from Harper Collins, 1991. A scholarly analysis of the role strong families play in building a strong society; includes a comprehensive survey of research on the topic.

The Magical Power of Family. Moira Eastman. Collins Dove, 1991. Brief, practical guide to building stronger family relationships.

Rebuilding the Nest: A New Commitment to the American Family. David Blankenhorn, Steven Bayme, and Jean Elshtain. $16.95 from Family Service America, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1990. Analyzes current trends in family life and presents theories on how family life can be strengthened.

When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children. Sylvia Ann Hewlett. $12.00 from Basic Books, 1991. Describes the ways in which public policies undermine the successful development of children.

Family Affairs. Institute for American Values, New York. Quarterly newsletter devoted to issues of child and family well-being.

Creating Sound Minds and Bodies: Health and Education Working Together. Policy Studies Associates, Inc. and the National Health/Education Consortium. 1992. Encourages collaborative efforts to help children become healthy and educated. Strategies include legislation, communication, community involvement, and school-based health centers.

What impact does the home environment have on learning?

America's Smallest School: The Family. $5.50 from the Policy Information Center, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ, 1992. Presents statistical evidence on the link between a student's achievement and home life.

Parent Involvement in Education. James S. Coleman. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, 1991. Discusses the important role parents and families play in children's success in school.

A Mother's Work. Deborah Fallows. Houghton Mifflin, 1985. Journalistic investigation of a variety of child care arrangements.

Home by Choice: Facing the Effect of Mother's Absence. Brenda Hunter. $12.99 from Multnomah Press, 1991. Explores the benefits of a mother's decision to remain at home to raise her children.

Childhood's Future. Richard Louv. $11.00 from Anchor Books, 1990. Makes the case for developing webs of supportive relationships in the family and community to care for young children.

Discovering Motherhood. Heidi L. Brennan, Pamela M. Goresh, and Catherine H. Myers. $11.00 from Mothers at Home, 1991. A practical guide for mothers, filled with advice and activities for their children and suggestions for connecting with other mothers.

Running on Empty: America's Time-Starved Families with Children. William R. Mattox, Jr. $10.00 from the Institute for American Values, New York, 1991. Cites changes in the family lifestyle that has lead to "time-starved families" and lists ways to increase family time together.

Perspectives on the New Familism. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead., Norval D. Glenn, and David Popenoe. $10.00 from the Institute for American Values, New York, 1991. Describes how the focus has shifted away from the individual to the family.

The Nature of Fatherhood. Karl Zinsmeister. $10.00 from the Institute for American Values, New York, 1991. Charts the various roles of fathers throughout time and describes the effects of inadequate family involvement by the father.

The Good Family Man: Fatherhood and the Pursuit of Happiness in America. David Blankenhorn. $10.00 from the Institute for American Values, New York, 1991. Describes fatherhood as a cultural invention with a changing "script" for each culture and time era. Relates this "script" to current American trends.

What are examples of standards for early childhood care and education?

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs. S. Bredekamp. $5.00 from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1987. Detailed recommendations from NAEYC on early child care and education.

Employer-Supported Child Care. Sandra Burud. $16.95 from Auburn House, 1985. Shows benefits of on-site and employer supported child care centers.

What does "ready to learn" mean, and how do we measure it?

"Readiness for School", in *Measuring Progress Toward the National Education Goals: Potential Indicators and Measurement Strategies.* From the National Education Goals Panel, Washington, DC, (in press). Suggests ways to define and gauge progress toward the first national education goal.

Reactions to the Goal 1 Technical Planning Subgroup Report on School Readiness. Cynthia D. Prince. National Education Goals Panel, Washington, DC, 1992. Includes individual state responses to the Panel's readiness report as well as suggestions for improvement.

What can states and communities do to prepare children for school?

Family Support, Education, and Involvement: A Guide to State Action. $6.00 from the Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, DC, 1989. Surveys parent and family education programs.

Ready to Learn: A Mandate for the Nation. Ernest Boyer. $8.00 from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1992. Discusses the extent to which children begin school ready to learn and offers policy recommendations for improving the situation.

Preparing Young Children for Success: Guideposts for Achieving Our First National Education Goal. U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, 1991. Offers strategies for improving school readiness.

Working with Families: Promising Programs to Help Parents Support Young Children's Learning. B. Goodson, J.P. Swartz, and M.A. Millsap. U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, 1991. Reviews 17 exemplary family education programs serving low income families.

Building Early Childhood Systems: A Resource Handbook. Jule M. Sugarman. $13.95 from the Child Welfare League of America, Washington DC, 1991. Tells how to construct a child care system at the state or local level from the ground up.

What can parents and families do to help their children to learn?

MegaSkills. Dorothy Rich. $12.95 from Houghton Mifflin, 1988. A guide for parents on how to give their children the skills they need to be successful.

Helping Your Child Learn Science. Nancy Paulu and Nancy Martin. U.S. Department of Education, Washington DC, 1992. Offers general advice and specific activities for parents to help their children do well in science.

Becoming a Nation of Readers: What Parents Can Do. Marilyn R. Binkley. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington DC, 1988. Provides advice to parents on how to make their children better readers.

What Your First Grader Needs to Know. E.D. Hirsch. $17.50 from Doubleday Publishing Company, 1991. A guide to parents.

Welcome Home. $15 a year from Mothers at Home, Vienna, Virginia. Monthly publication written, edited, and illustrated by and for at-home mothers.

P.E.T.: Parent Effectiveness Training. Thomas Gordon. $11.00 from Penguin USA, 1975. A tested way to raise responsible children.

Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care Fortieth Annual Edition. Dr. Benjamin Spock. $16.95 from Penguin USA, 1985. A thorough guide to child care, especially helpful for new parents.